Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, just think of the message that this sends to the rest of the world. When crowds were demonstrating in the Ukraine, we were cheering. We approved. We welcomed the so-called Orange Revolution. And we speak about bringing the fire of freedom to dark corners of the world, and yet here is one dark corner of the world where there is no light, there is no hope, and we do not bring the fire of freedom. And we wonder why polling data indicates that country after country, our traditional allies, look at us as having a mainly negative influence in the world, all because of the war in Iraq. That was the genesis.

Mr. Speaker, it will have implications for us.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). The Chair would remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair and not to the television audience.

PEAK OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, if you go to your computer this evening and do a Google search for peak oil, you will find there a large assortment of articles and comments. Like every issue, you will find a few people who are on the extreme, but there will be a lot of mainstream observations there.

One of the articles that you will find there was written by Matt Savinar. Matt Savinar is not a technical person. He is a lawyer, a good one, and he does what lawyers do. He goes to the sources and builds his case.

I remember in another life I was involved in morphing some of my knowledge of human physiology into the practical world, and I was awarded 20 patents. For every one of those I had a lawyer. I knew that he knew absolutely nothing about the subject that he was helping me on before he came to work with me. By the way, Mr. Speaker, the 20 patents I had, 19 were military patents so these were military lawyers. I was really impressed with how quickly they caught on and knew what was going on and were able to contribute.

I think that Matt Savinar has done that, and I wanted to begin this discussion this evening with a quote from Matt Savinar because it kind of grabs your attention and makes you either want to put down his article with the statement that gee, this guy cannot be for real, or you want to finish it to see the basis for his statement because he begins his article by saying, ''Dear Reader, Civilization as we know it is coming to an end soon.''

When my wife read that she had the first reaction that I mentioned, Gee, this guy is a nut. I am not going to read any further.

I said, Please read on and reserve judgment until you have finished reading his thesis.

She read on and at the end was genuinely frightened by what she read. I do not believe Matt Savinar has to be correct, but he could be correct. I am going to spend a few minutes this evening talking about the subject that caused Matt Savinar to make his prediction: ''Dear Reader, Civilization as we know it is coming to an end soon.''

I have on the first chart here a trend that I think everybody in America is familiar with. This shows the inflation rate, and we have done a pretty good job since 1995 in the last 10 years of taming inflation. It has gone up only slightly. But the zigzag magenta here is the price of fuel, of gasoline. This is a month or so old because you see it stops at $55 a barrel, and fuel oil from which we get gasoline is now up to around $60 a barrel. It has fallen off just a little now. It was over $60.

This is a trend that we are all familiar with and you see in the last 4 years from 2001 to 2005, if you draw a best fit line through those points, it would be a pretty steep slope. This gave rise to a letter that was written by about 30 prominent people in our country, McFarland, James Woolsey, Frank Gaffney, and a number of retired admirals and generals.

The next chart shows the subject of their letter to the President. They noted that we have only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, and that is a generally agreed upon figure. You will not find much contention with that statement. Some will say closer to 3 percent. They point out that we use 25 percent of the world's oil, and we are importing about two-thirds of what we use. That is up from about one-third that we imported as of the Arab oil embargo.

□ 2100

The other points here are significant ones, I think. This 25 percent of the oil used in the world is less than 5 percent of the world's population. If we divide the 280 million people in our country into the world's population, just short of 7 billion, we get about 22. So we are one person out of 22 in the world, and we use a fourth of all the world's energy.

These first two bullets here are really interesting ones. We have really only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves, but from that we are producing 8 percent of the world's oil. We are pretty good at pumping oil. What this says is that we are pumping our oil four times faster than the average well in the world. We do a good job of pumping oil.

Their letter to the President pointed out that this was an unacceptable national security risk. And the President himself, Mr. Speaker, has noted that much of this two thirds of imported oil that we get comes from countries, in his words, that do not even like us very much. They are unstable, unpredictable. And these 30 prominent Americans wrote to the President, saying: Mr. President, we think this is an unacceptable national security risk and our country needs to mount an aggressive program to free us from our dependence on foreign oil.

The next chart shows us how we got here. And we have to go back several decades, like 6 decades, to see where this story started, and it started with a Shell Oil Company geologist, a scientist, who was studying the exploitation and exhaustion of oil fields. And he noticed that for each typical oil field that production increased until it reached a peak, and, then after holding that peak for a little while, it started down the other side, and it is perfectly reasonable that the last oil that they get out of the well is probably going to be harder to get than the first oil that they get out of the well; so it should come more slowly. His name was M. King Hubbert, and he theorized that if he knew the totality of the oil fields in the United States and that they all behaved the way that several fields that he had studied behaved that he ought to then be able to predict when the United States would peak in oil production. And so he did that. He added up all of the fields that he knew of in the country. He made a reasonable estimate of how many more fields the country was likely to discover because this discovery trend followed a similar curve. That was a lot earlier on, and we generally are discovering the oil something like 30 or 40 years before we are using oil. And he then created a curve, a bell-shaped curve, which we call bell shaped because it rises to this peak and then falls off. That is a very typical curve that is familiar to scientists and statisticians. And he theorized that if he added up all the little bell curves in the country, he would get a big bell curve for the country. And he predicted in 1956, from his studies in the 1940s and 1950s, that the United States would peak in oil production about 1970. As it turned out, it was precisely 1970 that we peaked in oil production.

When he came up with that prediction, his employers told him, Please do not publish that; people will think you are silly. He published it anyhow, and when he finally was proven to be a prophet who had predicted correctly, he became something of an institution in his own time.

The smooth green curve here is the curve that he predicted, and he made this prediction in 1956. We were up that curve, and he predicted it would peak about 1970 and then fall off. And the more ragged, heavier green symbols, those are the actual production. And we now are well down on that curve. This is called Hubbert's Peak. And, Mr. Speaker, if one is doing this Google search, they can do one for Hubbert's Peak too, and they will find a lot of articles there, pretty much many of the same articles that one will find when they do a search for ''peak oil.''